(a) whether Government is still keen on developing Hindi as the national language of the country to be used as a medium of instruction and as an official language in the Centre and States; and

(b) if so, what are the efforts being made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) Under the provision of Article - 343, Hindi has been granted the status of Official Language of the Union. Accordingly, the Government is propagating the use of Official Language Hindi in the Government Offices/Public Sector Undertakings and Banks of the Union Government.

The National Policy on Education, 1986 provides for development of Hindi as the link language. The Policy provides for three language formula with regard to teaching of languages in schools. NPE - 1986 states that "at the secondary stage, the State Govt. should adopt, and vigorously implement, the three-language formula which includes the study of a modern Indian language, preferably one of southern languages, apart from Hindi and English in the Hindi speaking States, and of Hindi along with the regional language and English in the Non-Hindi speaking States".

Central Hindi Directorate, Kendriya Hindi Sansthan and Commission for Scientific and Technical Terminology are implementing a number of schemes for the Development of Hindi Language.

Percentage of GDP for education

1427.SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) by when Government is going to earmark six per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on education and its infrastructure development;

(b) by when Government is going to enact a law for universalisation of education; and

(c) why Government has reduced Central outlay for universal education from 50 per cent to 35 per cent, inspite of objection from the State Governments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) Government has accorded very high importance to the education sector during the XI Plan period and Eleventh Five Year Plan allocation of Rs.2,69,873 crore provided to the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Rs. 1,84,930 crore for the Department of School Education & Literacy and Rs.84,943 crore for Department of Higher Education), constitutes 19.4% of the total XI Plan allocation, as compared to 7.7% in the X Five Year Plan. This substantial increase in central plan outlay for education represent a very substantial effort on the part of the Central Government towards raising public spending on education towards the goal of 6% of GDP. Overall progress towards this goal, would however, also depend on the efforts made by the State Governments.

(b) There is no proposal to enact a law to universalise education.

(c) The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) programme approved in 2000-01 had envisaged a funding pattern of 50:50 between Central and State Governments at the onset of XI Plan period.

However, keeping in view the difficulties of the States, a revised and tapering funding pattern providing for 65:35 during the first and second year of XI Plan, 60:40 in third year, 55:45 in the fourth year and 50:50 thereafter has been notified for the XI Plan period. The North Eastern States will have a 90:10 funding ratio with the central share resourced out of the 10% funds earmarked for the North Eastern States, in the central budgets for SSA.

Sliding status in UNESCO's education index

†1428. SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India's place in the UNESCO's Education Index has slid from 100 to 105 and of the world's nearly 77 crore illiterates, India alone accounts for 27 crore;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether Government has taken note of the fact that the drop-out rate of the dalit children is increasing while their enrolment is decreasing; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and the measures being taken to check it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) As per the Education for All - Global Monitoring Report 2008 of UNESCO, India ranks 105th amongst 129 countries for which this report has been prepared. India has a composite Education for All Development Index (EDI) of 0.797. India ranked 99th in the Report for the year 2007 with a composite EDI of 0.789 and 101st in the Report for the year 2006 with a composite EDI of 0.741. Thus, even though the rank in the Global Monitoring Report is lower, India has consistently increased its position on the scale of EDI. The Report also estimates the number of illiterates in the population aged 15+ during the period 1995-2004 to be 774 million in the world. In case of India, it is estimated to be 268 million.

(c) No, Sir. As per available data, the enrolment of children belonging to SC & ST households has consistently improved over the last decade while dropout rate has declined.

(d) Question does not arise.

Private self-financing engineering colleges

1429.SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of private self-financing engineering colleges in the country, State-wise; and

(b) how many private engineering colleges have been given permission for deemed university status in 2006-07 and 2007-08?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) There are 2099 private self financing engineering colleges in the country. The State-wise details are enclosed as Statement (*See* below).

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.